

REMARKS

Claim 1-13 are pending in the subject application prior to entry of this Amendment. By the Amendment herewith, Applicant cancels without prejudice claims 1-13 and adds new claims 14-35 as supported throughout the specification. No new matter is presented. More particularly, claim 14 is independent and recites:

14. Process for metallizing an article comprising a first high temperature polymer material, including the following steps:
 - e) cleaning and degreasing the article;
 - f) activating by etching the article surface with a plasma gas;
 - g) grafting the activated surface with metallic atoms;
 - h) metallizing the grafted surface by immersing the article in a chemical metallizing bath at a temperature ranging from 50 to 70°C.

See, for example, page 7 of the specification for support. Remaining claims 15-35 depend from the above independent claim and are directed to further advantageous features of the claimed invention.

In the Action, prior claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 USC Section 102(b) as being anticipated by Cleveland et al. (US Patent 5,407,622) or Orlowski et al. (US Patent 5,153,023).

The foregoing rejections are respectfully disagreed with, and are traversed below.

As noted above, claims 1-13 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 14-35 are presented to further clarify an embodiment of Applicant's invention. It is respectfully asserted that the cited references do not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention as set forth in claims 14-35 for at least the following reasons.

The Cleveland et al. reference discloses a process for making metallized plastic articles. The teachings of Cleveland et al. lead a person of ordinary skill in the art away from Applicant's claimed process. In particular, the skilled person would not

even consider carrying out experiments to result in Applicant's claimed process as Cleveland et al. teach that only amorphous polymer is metallized (See, col. 6, lines 44-50, lines 63-66; col. 7, lines 57-67 and col. 9, lines 51-60). As described at page 3 of Applicant's specification, support qualities of amorphous polymers are of limited interest due to their temperature limitations.

Cleveland et al. do not disclose a process for metallizing an article comprising a first high temperature polymer material including Applicant's recited steps. In contrast to the teachings of Cleveland et al., Applicant's claimed invention sets forth a process to metallize, for example, semi-crystalline or liquid crystal polymer by submitting the article to an adequate surface activation process. Applicant's claim 24 particularly specifies that the high temperature polymer is chosen from among semi-crystalline polymers or liquid crystal polymers or PBT or PPS or SPS. As further described in Applicant's specification at pages 3-4, in the field of electronic circuits and connectors, plastic materials with high thermal resilience are preferred, of the semi-crystalline and/or liquid crystal type.

Similarly, Orlowski et al. do not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed process. As referenced by Applicant at page 1 of the subject specification, Orlowski et al. disclose the deposition of a catalyst precursor. According to Orlowski et al., selective metallising is achieved by locally heating those zones where it is desired to attach the catalyst and rinsing the piece to dissolve the precursor in the places where metallising is not desired. Orlowski et al. do not disclose metallizing an article comprising a first high temperature material, including the specific steps of cleaning and degreasing the article; activating by etching the article surface with a plasma gas; grafting the activated surface with metallic atoms; and metallizing the grafted surface by immersing the article in a chemical metallizing bath at a temperature range from 50 to 70°C.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is requested to reconsider and withdrawn the outstanding rejections, and allow the subject application. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted:

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